

MOUNTAIN TOP

||: music  center :||

Annual Report

July 1, 2022— June 30, 2023



Mountain Top Music Center is classes and lessons for all ages, student recitals, the Community Orchestra, concerts and events in the Majestic Theatre, and music, drink and food in the Majestic Café.



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From the Board of Trustees Chair and the Executive Director

Leonard Bernstein once said "To achieve great things, two things are needed: a plan, and not quite enough time." We've had both in 2023 at Mountain Top, and perhaps that's the reason the year has been so busy, productive, and fun! Our first full year of performances in the beautifully renovated Majestic Theatre and Café produced 18 Mainstage Series concerts, 18 free/by donation Community Series concerts, 6 special events, and 63 musical performances in the Majestic Café. There have also been 15 events from partner organizations such as Arts in Motion Theatre Company, The Cold River Radio Show, Music in the Great North Woods, One Book One Valley Read, and the Gibson Center.

By expanding our concert/event production activities we are pleased to be serving new audiences as well as old, thus reaching more deeply into the community with our mission of enriching lives and building community through music. Mountain Top is growing exponentially – as we knew it would – by creating a place in the valley where music education and music performance can exist side-by-side.

Learners of all ages from babies to octogenarians take private and ensemble lessons and attend a variety of performances by top quality musicians, both local and from afar. Our now 16 music teachers provide private lessons to 200+ students annually, and our internal and outreach group classes touch hundreds more, from preschoolers at Conway's Children Unlimited to senior citizens at the MWV Adult Day Center.

We all feel invigorated by the early success of these endeavors, but we fully acknowledge the challenges ahead of us, and the paramount importance of fundraising to advance our work and mission. We are profoundly grateful to our many donors and grantors, to the many community members who volunteer to help with concerts and in the café, to the local musicians who continue to offer advice and performance; and to the dedicated staff and faculty who work overtime to ensure the smooth running of Mountain Top Music Center. This Annual Report for 2023 is dedicated to all of them.

The year ahead will be a pivotal period for Mountain Top. The growth we are experiencing affects all areas of our organization, including governance, management, the school, and performance. As a result, we begin a new three year strategic plan in 2024 which will guide the overall direction of the organization. We are pleased to share the future goals from that plan on page 8 of this report, and welcome your suggestions, and most important, your participation in achieving them.

Judy Kennedy
Chair, MTMC Board of Trustees

George Wiese
Executive Director

From the Director of Education

Mountain Top Music Center's music educational programs are at the core of the organization's work and remain extremely popular in the community. In 2023, our 16 music teachers taught more than 5,000 music lessons to students of all ages, from babies to octogenarians. The faculty shares the philosophy that excellent teaching and learning occur in a constructive and supportive environment. All lessons are tailored to each student's age, skill level, interests, and learning goals.

As part of our mission to provide "music for all," we strive to make music education affordable and accessible. Payment plans, multi-lesson discounts, and affordable instrumental rental are available, as is need-based tuition assistance, free classes for youth students, and free community concerts.

Enrollment in private lessons and ensemble groups remained strong in 2023, and attendance at lessons was excellent. We offered lessons on orchestral and band instruments (strings, winds, brass), harp, piano, bass, acoustic and electric guitar, voice, and percussion. Ensemble experiences build both musicianship and

friendship. 2023 groups included Jazz Band for Adults, Chamber Ensembles, Piano Duettters, Singers' Workshop, Cover/Jam Band, Strings After School, Beginning Ukulele, and Youth Ensemble.

The MTMC Community Orchestra, conducted by our faculty, brings together students, teachers, community members, amateurs, and professionals to collaborate on orchestral repertoire and perform several concerts annually in venues around the region. The "Top of the Mountain" Honors Program students embark on musical creativity projects including professional performances around the community and workshops on music technology and songwriting. A new partnership with the MWV Adult Day Center is bringing the joy and wellbeing benefits of music weekly to an essential population.

No matter how many world-class musicians visit Conway to perform at the Majestic Theatre, the teaching faculty of Mountain Top are the hometown heroes who keep our community humming daily. Here are snapshots of a few of them to give you a sense of their interests and background.

Dr. Julia Howell, Director of Education



JUSTIN RAMOS – piano, composition, guitar

Justin is a professional pianist, educator, and engaging performer. He is skilled in many musical styles, from classical to jazz, rock to pop, and even hip-

hop. He focuses on "unlocking the musical potential in every student." His lessons include musical expression, ear training, sight reading, music theory and improvisation, and confidence in performance.

He graduated from Berklee College of Music with a bachelor's in film scoring. He has performed actively on the New England scene with many bands, and he is also a composer and will release his debut solo piano album, "Solstice in Solitude," in early 2024.

CHRIS DZENGELEWSKI — drumset, beginning/intermediate woodwinds, jazz/rock/pop ensembles

Chris is an experienced drummer and music educator born and raised in New England and holds a bachelor's degree in music performance and percussion from the University of Maine. He is



also an alum of Berklee College of Music and a former United States Army Band member. He has been active in

the global music community for more than 12 years as a performer and teacher.

While in college, he began teaching individual music lessons. He ultimately founded a broad-based music school where he assembled a team of highly talented music teachers from the Boston community. His teaching philosophy is to teach with structure, theory, and a demonstrated commitment to lifelong learning and to positively influence his students by modeling genuine enthusiasm and love for his work.

MEGHAN KELLEHER – voice, piano

Meghan is a singer, educator, songwriter, and producer, as well as a voice and piano teacher at Mountain Top. She is a firm believer that everyone can sing, and joy and passion are just as important as technique.

A Rhode Island native, she grew up singing at church, in school, and in regional musical theatre productions. Graduating from Brown University in 2012 with a B.A. in Music History, Theory, and Composition, she co-wrote and music directed three original musicals at Brown, and served as a dual performer/music director for multiple student opera companies as well as the all-female a cappella group the Ursa Minors, for whom she arranged dozens of songs. Earning her MFA in Theatre from Sarah Lawrence College in 2017, her studies centered around collaboration, creation of new work, and exploring ways to push the boundaries of music and sound design in live performance.



2022-2023 Concerts and Events

Concert and event activities continue to grow as we expand the use of the recently renovated Majestic Theatre and Café. Our goal is to build a performing arts venue of regional prominence with strong community engagement, offering breadth and variety in programming, staying committed to excellence, and adding value to the cultural life of the region. Taking a step back from the obvious metrics of number of performances per month, variety of programming, number of new positions created, and seeing Conway village bathed in the light of the Majestic marquee in the evenings, success to us also looks like these scenarios:

- ◆ A local family finds frequent music events in their own community that are of interest and accessible.
- ◆ The quality of programming attracts new visitors to the area who also patronize local eateries, stores, and lodging.
- ◆ The 350+ students of MTMC and students throughout the valley benefit from the constant access to quality arts programming in their home community.
- ◆ The identity of Conway village strengthened by the Majestic serving as an anchor business, providing the community with a sense of pride as well as cultural and economic relevance.



From July 2022 to June 2023, the Theatre and the Café together produced well over 100 performances ranging from solo guitar to jazz ensembles, classical orchestra concerts, and special community events. Starting the year was a sold-out Neil Diamond tribute band Cherry-Cherry in Aug 2022, followed by a superb performance of Bach's B Minor Mass with 16 singers and 16 instrumentalists in September, a bluegrass group Beg Steal or Borrow in October, Heather Pierson's Charlie Brown Christmas during the holidays, another sellout with folk singer Livingston Taylor in February, the music of Mozart/Schubert/Schumann in March, and ending with a Beatles tribute in June, just to name a few favorites who appeared this year as part of the Majestic Mainstage Series. Of special note was the appearance of Livingston Taylor, who had also performed on the Majestic stage 50 years ago and was thrilled to return!



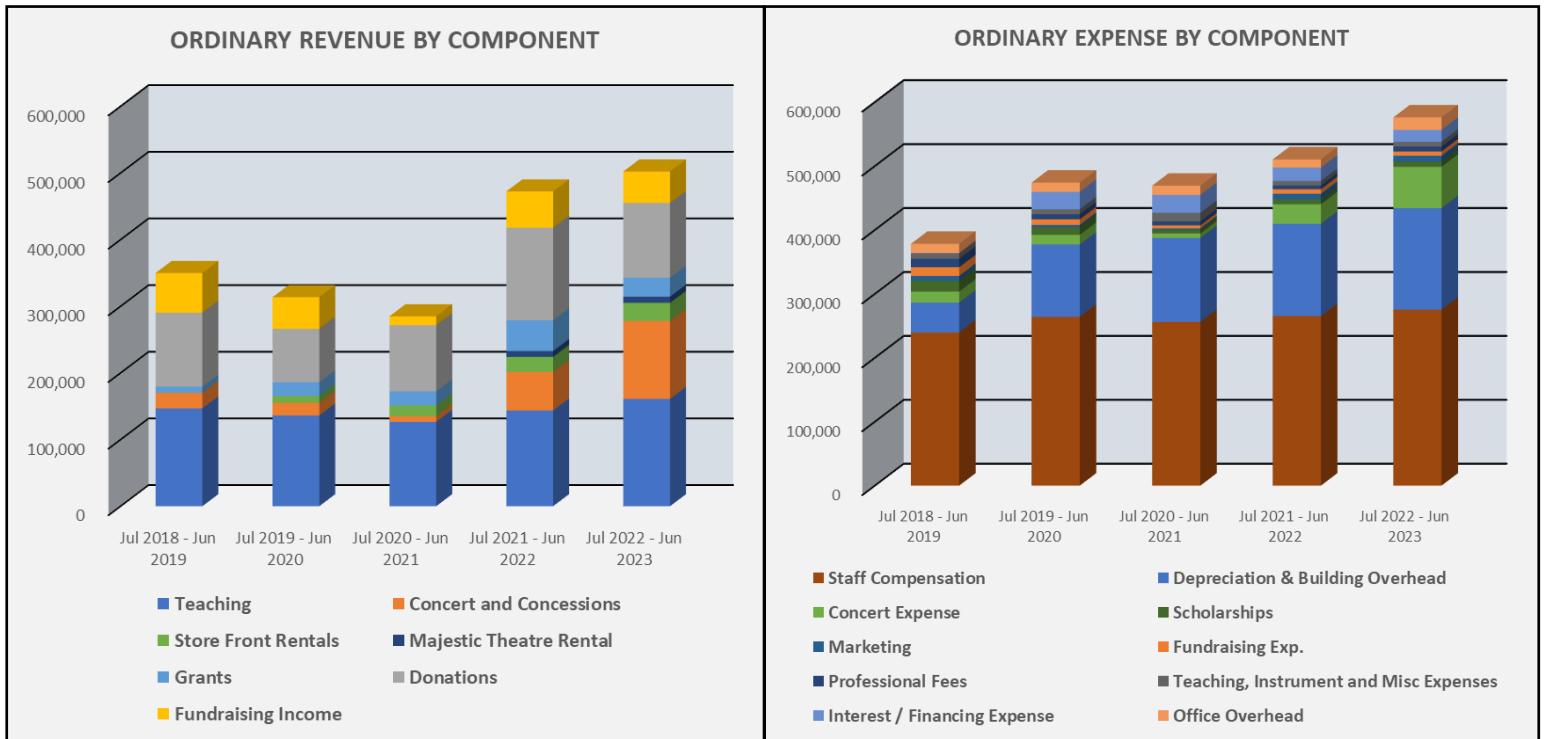
Our popular First Friday Series continued monthly where the faculty and their friends perform for an hour at noon for anyone who wants to drop by on a "by donation" or "pay what you can" basis. And the Café's Friday night jazz offerings became affectionately known as "the hottest ticket in Conway," according to local journalist Tom Eastman, who attends regularly. Musicians who frequently perform in the Café and built that reputation include Al Hospers, Heather Pierson, Mike Sakash, Dan Moore, Mike Hathaway, Ken & Laurie Turley, Michael Beling, Jed Wilson, and members of the Mountain Top faculty.

As a grand finale to the year, Executive Director George Wiese invited the amazing Gunhild Carling, "Sweden's Queen of Swing" who sings, tap dances and plays more than 10 instruments, and her fabulous rhythm band to play for the Spring Gala, Mountain Top's major fundraiser, held each year in May and hosted by Stone Mountain Arts Center. That event and the many community members who lend financial support via concert sponsorships and attendance make it possible for our educational and concert programming to thrive, for which we are most grateful.

The Mountain Top Music Concerts and Events Committee



Financial Report



Donors between July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Mark Albee | Joanne Corcoran | Larry Garland |
| Thomas & Karen Albert | Mary & David Cronin | Christine Gatten |
| Norma Alexander | Dana Cunningham | Ken & Joan Gatto |
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| Bill Carney | Deborah Fauver | William Hilarides |
| Sandra & Larry Carr | Mary Ellen Fennessy | John Hoffman |
| Anonymous Cash | Judith Fowler | Susan Hoople |
| Hadley Champlin | William Frey | Al Hospers |
| Joy & Richard Check | Anne Frost | Jenny & Greg Huang-Dale |
| Genevieve Christy | Beth & Gino Funicella | Lawrence H Huemmler |
| Lora Colten | Stephen & Wendy Gaal | Valerie & David Jensen |
| Janet Cooke | Laurie Gabriel | Bengt & Kathryn Karlsson |

Donors July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 continued

Judith & Daniel Kennedy	Alice Pepper	Ashara Stansfield & Terry Mednick
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Barbara Lubin	Elizabeth (Liza) & Ned Rogerson	Stephen Tooley
Bernice Martin	Jane Rosenberg	Karen & James Umberger
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Peter Pattengill	Ted & Mary Smyth	Paul Williams & Eileen Kiernan
Margaret Pendergast	Luke Stafford	Bradley Woodbrey
		Arlene & Charles Zaccaria



Grantors July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023

Northern Borders Regional Commission
NH Community Development Finance Authority
The Kendall C. and Anna Ham Foundation
The Robert and Dorothy Goldberg Charitable Foundation
New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
NH State Council for the Arts

Business Sponsors July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023

302 West Smokehouse & Tavern
Albany Service Center
Almost There Sports Tavern & Restaurant
Alpine Title Services, Inc.
Badger Peabody & Smith Realty
Bagels Plus
Bank of New Hampshire
Bavarian Chocolate Haus
Bergen Motor Werks
Cafe Noche
Center for Natural Health
Chalmers Insurance Group
Charles Double Reed Co., LLC/North Conway Music
Cooper Cargill Chant
Cormack Construction Management, Inc.
Country Cabinets
Debony, LLC
DW Electrical Contractors, Inc.
E G Chandler Property Management
Eagle Mountain House
Eastern Green Inc
Gemini Sign & Design
Givio Charitable
Independent Restaurants of MWV (dba Valley Originals)
Inn at Crystal Lake
Inn at Thorne Hill/Christmas Farm Inn
J & J Floor Covering, Inc.
Leone, McDonnell & Roberts
Max's at The Snowvillage Inn
McSheffrey's Up North
Milford Flooring, Inc.

Minute Man Press
MiVida Gardens
Mountain View Dental
North Country Fair Jewelers
Northeast Auto Body, Inc.
Peter Limmer & Sons
Pinkham Real Estate
Profile Subaru
Progressive Autoworks LLC
Ragged Mountain Equipment, Inc
Richard M. Plusch Antiques
Robert Frost Public Charter School
RogersGray, a Baldwin Risk Partner
Starboard Advisors
Stone Mountain Music LLC
Kathleen E. Sweeney, CPA
The Metropolitan Coffee House
The UPS Store (#3312)
The Wentworth
Tuckerman Brewing Company
Up-a-Notch, Ltd
Valley Personal Training
Valley Vintage & Antique Finds
Varsity Beverage
White Birch Booksellers, Inc.
White Mountain Oil & Propane
White Mountain Puzzles
White Mountain Stove Shop
Whitney's Inn
Wildcat Inn & Tavern
Yankee Smokehouse Restaurant

Volunteers July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023

Maxine Booth	Cathie Lewis
Bruce Borofsky	Karen MacDonald
Anne Marie Erler	Michael Simoff
Barbara Douglas	Kathy Shea
Anne Gallagher	Linda Walker
Trish Irwin	Carren Webber
Bob Irwin	Scott Webber
Kathy Keene	Mark Williams
Josie Lamb	Tashi Williams



Mountain Top Music Center's Strategic Plan 2024 – 2026

The Strategic Plan 2024 – 2026 seeks to support Mountain Top Music Center in its continued evolution with a focus on maintaining a successful music education program while operating a performance venue offering diverse programming and serving as a cornerstone in the revitalization of Conway Village. The approach adopted by the Strategic Plan Committee focused on identifying four broad strategic goals supported by a management-developed annual work plan delineating operational initiatives. This approach would enable the strategic plan to remain stable while the annual workplan could be dynamic and updated as needed to reflect changes in the micro- and macro-operational environments.

Performance Goals

- ◆ Implement a comprehensive concert and event planning process across each venue i.e. theater, café, and home concert setting.
 - ◆ Offer diverse programming reflective of community interests and align with mission statement.
- ◆ Develop a collaborative network of local / regional performance venues.

Education Goals

- ◆ Maintain K-12 student enrollment at FY2023 level.
 - ◆ Increase adult engagement.
- ◆ Maintain diverse and talented faculty with sufficient capacity to meet client needs.

Management Goals

- ◆ Maintain positive operating cash flow.
- ◆ Develop and implement an innovative best practices marketing and branding plan across all operational components (school, theater, and café).
 - ◆ Formulate a formal work plan in support of the strategic goals with periodic review by the Board of Trustees.
 - ◆ Develop and maintain balanced staffing sufficient to support Mountain Top operations.
 - ◆ Establish and maintain an effective relationship with donors, grantors, and foundations.
 - ◆ Diversify volunteer opportunities.

Governance Goals

- ◆ Maintain fiduciary responsibilities and duties.
- ◆ Identify prospective Trustees and Advisors with complementary skills and expertise to sustain and strengthen the organization.
 - ◆ Review current committee structure and update as necessary.
- ◆ Build strong organizational relationships in the community and support collaborative efforts and initiatives.